

Additional Information

Tips For Observing and Photographing Dragonflies

Dragonflies can be loosely lumped into categories of “perchers” or “flyers”. Perchers, such as some of the skimmers, have a usual or favorite perch which they return to repeatedly. Some flyers have a usual route, a beat which they fly back and forth in the same area. You can pre-focus your camera or binoculars on that area to get a close look. Some have a large, long beat and are more difficult to predict, so some luck and persistence are required to find them perched. Most odonates are most active in middle of the day, but some are more active early and late, roosting most of the day in the shade. Be prepared, research and study your subjects first to know the preferred habitats. Binoculars, especially close-focus binoculars are a great aid for observing all nature subjects.

Approach slowly, getting closer and snapping away as you go (with today’s digital cameras, you can always delete later), a good distant shot is better than none and will be of some aid in identifying later.

Try to align planes of focus; for example, a side view is usually good, so move to the side for a clear side view of the dragonfly. A “3/4 view” can show face and eyes as well as the side. Some field marks are more important than others in differentiating one species from another. Get more than one angle if possible.

Sun at your back is always good for photographic detail but be ready to use flash to “fill” in the detail on the shadow side if the subject is back-lit or in any dark situation.

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About ATBI

This brochure was compiled and developed by the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) group. ATBI is an on-going project in Tennessee State Parks and State Natural Areas. The goal of ATBI is to document all species in Tennessee State Parks, monitor long-term trends in specific taxonomic groups, and promote education about and preservation of all biodiversity with increased science and citizen education efforts. To access the ATBI database, go to www.tn.gov/environment/parks/atbi.

For more information about ATBI, please contact David Hill, 7th Floor, L & C Tower, 401 Church St., Nashville, TN 37243. Email david.r.hill@tn.gov. Phone 615-253-2455.

Dragonfly References

Beaton, Giff. 2007. Dragonflies and Damselflies of Georgia and the Southeast. A Wormsloe Foundation Nature Book.

Dunkle, Sidney. 2000. Dragonflies through Binoculars: A Field Guide to Dragonflies of North America. Oxford University Press.

Nikula, Blair et al. 2002. Stokes Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies. Little, Brown & Company.

<http://www.odonatacentral.org/>. Dragonfly Society of the Americas. This site has checklists of dragonflies by county.

Collecting of plants or animals in state parks and natural areas is prohibited. Please help preserve Tennessee's natural heritage by leaving plants and animals for others to enjoy.

HARPEETH RIVER STATE PARK

1640 Cedar Hill Road

Kingston Springs, TN 37082

Phone: (931) 952-2399

www.tn.gov/environment/parks/HarpethRiver/

NOTE: Harpeth River State Park does not have a visitors center.

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS DIVISION OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI)

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Harpeth River State Park and Cheatham and Davidson Counties



Photo © Richard Connors

Welcome to the wonderful world of dragonflies at beautiful Harpeth River State Park! Of the approximate 154 species of odonates (dragonflies and damselflies) in Tennessee, 81 have been documented in this park or Cheatham and Davidson Counties.

Above is a picture of a female *Dythemis velox*, the Swift Setwing. Formerly occurring only south of our area, it has now been found across the state, including at the Hidden Lake section of the Park. The Swift Setwing is named for the typical way they hold their wings down at an angle rather than horizontal like most other dragonflies.

Dragonfly and Damselfly Checklist of Harpeth River State Park and Cheatham and Davidson Counties

Damselflies (Zygoptera)

Broad-winged Damselflies (Calopterygidae)

- HCD ☐ Ebony Jewelwing
HCD ☐ American Rubyspot
D ☐ Smoky Rubyspot

Spreadwings (Lestidae)

- D ☐ Great Spreadwing
D ☐ Southern Spreadwing
D ☐ Sweetflag Spreadwing
D ☐ Elegant Spreadwing
D ☐ Slender Spreadwing
D ☐ Lyre-tipped Spreadwing

Pond Damselflies (Coenagrionidae)

- HCD ☐ Blue-fronted Dancer
CD ☐ Variable Dancer
H ☐ Smoky-winged Dancer
HCD ☐ Powdered Dancer
HCD ☐ Blue-ringed Dancer
HCD ☐ Blue-tipped Dancer
HD ☐ Dusky Dancer
D ☐ Aurora Damsel
D ☐ Azure Bluet
D ☐ Familiar Bluet
D ☐ Marsh Bluet
HCD ☐ Stream Bluet
D ☐ Skimming Bluet
D ☐ Orange Bluet
H ☐ Slender Bluet
D ☐ Vesper Bluet
D ☐ Citrine Forktail
HCD ☐ Fragile Forktail
D ☐ Furtive Forktail
D ☐ Eastern Forktail

Dragonflies (Anisoptera)

Petalails (Petaluridae)

- C ☐ Gray Petaltail

Darners (Aeshnidae)

- CD ☐ Shadow Darner
HD ☐ Common Green Darner
H ☐ Comet Darner
H ☐ Springtime Darner
H ☐ Fawn Darner
D ☐ Swamp Darner

Clubtails (Gomphidae)

- D ☐ Jade Clubtail
HCD ☐ Black-shouldered Spinyleg
D ☐ Flag-tailed Spinyleg
CD ☐ Eastern Ringtail
CD ☐ Handsome Clubtail
D ☐ Cocoa Clubtail
C ☐ Rapids Clubtail
CD ☐ Cobra Clubtail
HC ☐ Dragonhunter
CD ☐ Rusty Snaketail
C ☐ Eastern Least Clubtail
D ☐ Elusive Clubtail
D ☐ Russet-tipped Clubtail

Cruisers (Macromiidae)

- HCD ☐ Stream Cruiser
HCD ☐ Illinois (Swift) River Cruiser
C ☐ Royal River Cruiser

Emeralds (Corduliidae)

- C ☐ Common Baskettail
HD ☐ Prince Baskettail
H ☐ Uhler's Sundragon
D ☐ Umber Shadowdragon
C ☐ Stygian Shadowdragon
D ☐ Fine-lined Emerald
D ☐ Mocha Emerald

Skimmers (Libellulidae)

- D ☐ Calico Pennant
D ☐ Halloween Pennant
HD ☐ Swift Setwing
HD ☐ Eastern Pondhawk
H ☐ Blue Corporal
D ☐ Golden-winged Skimmer
HD ☐ Slaty Skimmer
HD ☐ Widow Skimmer
D ☐ Twelve-spotted Skimmer
D ☐ Painted Skimmer
HD ☐ Blue Dasher
HD ☐ Wandering Glider
D ☐ Spot-winged Glider
HD ☐ Eastern Amberwing
HD ☐ Common Whitetail
D ☐ Blue-faced Meadowhawk
D ☐ Variegated Meadowhawk
D ☐ Autumn Meadowhawk

- D ☐ Striped Saddlebags
D ☐ Carolina Saddlebags
HD ☐ Black Saddlebags
D ☐ Red Saddlebags

Documented from:

- H Harpeth River State Park
C Cheatham County
D Davidson County

Habitat

The Harpeth River State Park is located along the winding Harpeth River in Middle Tennessee a few miles west of Nashville. This Park is comprised of several sections including Newsom's Mill, the Gossett Tract, Mound Bottom, and the Narrows. These areas are rich in historic significance and natural beauty. There are several miles of easy to difficult trails meandering through wildflower meadows, lush forests, and along majestic bluffs. The Narrows is the site of one of the oldest man-made tunnels in existence today.

Good spots

*Hidden Lake, the Gossett Tract and The Narrows are all good sites for dragonflies and damselflies.

*Look on the river and in water willow beds along the river.

*Look in fields and open areas and along trails.

*On and around any of the lakes.

Notes _____
